

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1747

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP CH BG US
SUBJECT: VISIT OF PRC VICE PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN: PROTOCOL
ASPECTS

REFS: A. MANILA 4014 B. PEKING 0680 C. STATE 064337
D. DACCA 1720

SUMMARY: THE BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT PROVIDED FULL PROTOCOLARY HONORS TO PRC VICE PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN AND HIS PARTY DURING THEIR OFFICIAL VISIT TO BANGLADESH. THIS INCLUDED INVITATIONS TO THE CHIEFS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS FROM THE CHIEF OF PROTOCOL TO BE PRESENT AT THE ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE CEREMONIES AND AN INVITATION FROM PRESIDENT ZIA FOR A BANQUET ON MARCH 18 AT THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE IN HONOR OF THE VISITING CHINESE DIGNITARIES. THE VICE PREMIER HOSTED A RETURN DINNER ON MARCH 20. THE DCM IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHARGE (THE NEW AMBASSADOR NOT YET HAVING PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS) WAS INVITED TO AND ATTENDED ALL OF THESE FUNCTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. BANGLADESH'S COOL SEASON, NOW ENDED, AND PRESIDENT
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ZIA'S OWN EXTENSIVE SERIES OF FOREIGN VISITS DURING THE PAST YEAR SET THE STAGE FOR SEVERAL HIGH-LEVEL FOREIGN VISITS TO DACCA. THIS YEAR THESE VISITORS HAVE INCLUDED P.M. CALLAGHAN AND THE KING AND QUEEN OF NEPAL. THE VISIT OF PRC VICE PREMIER LI HSIEN-NIEN MARCH 18-22, 1978 WAS HANDLED, FROM A PROTOCOL POINT OF VIEW, ALMOST IDENTICALLY WITH THAT OF THE NEPALESE RULERS. ADVISORS (MINISTERS),

DIPLOMATS, CHIEFS OF STAFF, AND MINISTRY SECRETARIES (THE SENIOR CIVIL SERVANTS) WERE INVITED AND GENERALLY TURNED OUT FOR THE FORMAL OCCASIONS WHICH INCLUDED ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE CEREMONIES, TWO BANQUETS, AND AN OPEN-AIR CIVIC RECEPTION. THE DCM, IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHARGE, AND HIS WIFE WERE INCLUDED IN THE INVITATIONS, AND ATTENDED, INCLUDING THE RETURN BANQUET GIVEN BY VP LI, ALSO AT THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE WHERE THE CHINESE PARTY WAS HOUSED. THE BD VICE PRESIDENT HOSTED A DINNER FOR THE VP ON MARCH 19, BUT NEITHER THE DCM NOR, AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, OTHER DIPLOMATS WERE INVITED THERE.

2. THE ONLY UNUSUAL NOTE WAS THAT BDG CHIEF OF PROTOCOL RAHMAN CALLED THE DCM AT HOME AT ABOUT 0915 MARCH 18 TO ASK WHETHER THE DCM HAD RECEIVED VARIOUS INVITATIONS AND THE DCM SAID "YES." RAHMAN SAID THAT THEY WERE AWARE THAT THE U.S. DID NOT HAVE FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PRC AND WONDERED WHETHER THE DCM INTENDED TO ATTEND. THE DCM SAID YES, HE HAD BEEN INVITED AND HAD ACCEPTED. THERE WERE NO OBJECTIONS FROM THE US POINT OF VIEW. THE DCM ASKED WHETHER THE CHIEF OF PROTOCOL WOULD RATHER THAT (#)

SAID NO, HE JUST WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT THE DCM REALIZED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE TO COME.

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3. LATER THAT MORNING ONE OF THE FIRST PEOPLE THAT DCM SAW AT THE AIRPORT FOR THE VICE PREMIER'S ARRIVAL WAS THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR WHO GREETED HIM IN HIS USUAL POLITE FASHION. AS TO CHIEFS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, IN ADDITION TO THOSE WHOSE ABSENCE FOR VARIOUS REASONS MIGHT HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATED (THE SAUDI AND SOUTH KOREAN AMBASSADORS AND THE PAPAL NUNCIO) MOST OF THE EAST EUROPEANS WERE ABSENT: USSR, GRD, BULGARIA, POLAND, AND HUNGARY. PRESENT WERE THE CZECH AMBASSADOR (DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS), THE NEW YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR WHO HAD JUST PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS AND THE RUMANIAN.

4. EARLY AFTERNOON OF MARCH 18 THE PRC EMBASSY TELEPHONED THIS EMBASSY TO INVITE THE DCM TO A RETURN DINNER TO BE GIVEN BY THE CHINESE ON MONDAY, MARCH 20. THE ACCEPTANCE WAS TRANSMITTED FROM THE DCM'S SECRETARY TO THE CHINESE EMBASSY AND FORMAL INVITATIONS WERE DISTRIBUTED SATURDAY EVENING AT THE BANGLADESH DINNER. IN THE COURSE OF THE EVENING, THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR ENQUIRED WHETHER THE DCM HAD RECEIVED HIS INVITATION TO THE CHINESE DINNER. OTHER THAN THESE CONTACTS WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND SHAKING V.P. LI'S HAND ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN RECEIVING LINES, THERE WAS NO PERSONAL CONTACT AND NO EXCHANGES. MOST OF THE EE AMBASSADORS WERE PRESENT AT THE PRESIDENT'S BANQUATE BUT NOT AT THE CHINESE RETURN DINNER.

5. COMMENT: THESE WERE, FOR BANGLADESH, LARGE FUNCTIONS. IN EFFECT, BOTH THE BANGLADESHIS AND THE CHINESE TREATED THE DCM AS THOUGH U.S. RELATIONS WITH PEKING WERE NO DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF SWITZERLAND REPRESENTED HERE BY A CHARGE OR AUSTRALIA WHICH HAS AN ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER.
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